



# Secure Commonwealth Panel

June 12, 2012 - Richmond

Attendees: Terrie Suit, Joseph Bouchard, Jessica Brooks, Carrie Cantrell, Marla Decker, Jim Duffey, Tom Garrett, Bill Hazel, Jim Horton, Algie Howell, Cathie Hutchins, Dan Jenkins, Edward Macon, Dario Marquez, Mike Melo, John O'Bannon, Jim Redick, Beverly Sherwood, Margaret Vanderhye, David Wright.

## **Welcoming Remarks**

Terrie Suit, Chair, opened the meeting and thanked all for their attendance.

Introductions were made by the panel.

## **Northern Virginia Evacuation Update and Winter Lessons Learned**

Virgil Gray, Department of Emergency Management, provided an update on the Northern Virginia evacuation plan and winter lessons learned.

Please see handout.

Secretary Suit informed the panel that the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) is in the process of reviewing the structure of the National Capital Region. The entrance interview was held last week. The GAO is concerned that no one single individual is responsible for coordination of efforts in an emergency.

A question was asked about shelters and their capabilities. Michael Cline, Department of Emergency Management, told the panel that the Commonwealth has 19 facilities identified as state controlled shelters. Five or six of those sites will be ready in 72 hours noticed with pre-stocked supplies and personnel on standby. The other sites are in varying stages of readiness. If there is an extremely bad disaster, the state will be able to fall back on localities that have their own shelter capacity. These sites may not have handicap accessibility or pet abilities, but they will be able to meet the requirement for a category 3 hurricane or terrorist event. The state also has Emergency Management Assistant Compacts in place with neighboring states to help with the evacuation population and the state can rely upon the federal government for shelters as well. The Department of Emergency Management coordinates a working group that meets regularly to look at gaps and to plan to fill those gaps.

**National Capital Region Emergency Website**

Merni Fitzgerald, Fairfax County, provided the panel with a virtual tour of the new National Capital Region website, [www.capitalregionupdates.gov](http://www.capitalregionupdates.gov). This site is a wonderful resource for situational awareness of an emergency in the National Capital Region. The website provides citizens with information on emergency alerts, weather and traffic forecasts, utilities update, preparing for a disaster, and much more.

**2013 Presidential Inauguration Update**

Lt Col Christopher Smith of the Joint Task Force – National Capital Region briefed the panel members on an overview of the Department of Defense planning support to the 57<sup>th</sup> Presidential Inauguration.

Please see handout.

**Navy Aircraft Incident in Virginia Beach: Preparation and Response**

Dr. Karen Remley, Department of Health, provided the panel with the Health Department's preparations and response to the April 12<sup>th</sup> incident involving a navy jet crashing into an apartment complex.

Chief Bruce Edwards, Virginia Beach Department of Emergency Medical Services and Chief Steven Cover, Virginia Beach Fire Department briefed the panel on their training preparations for accidents such as these, their response and recovery activities, and provided the panel with pictures of the incident that day.

Secretary Suit and the panel members were very complementary of the job the City and the Health Department performed on their response and recovery efforts.

**Closing Remarks**

Secretary Suit announced the next meeting as October 10 at 1:00 p.m. and adjourned the meeting.